

Info Sheet 1

Social Security Timeline

Theme 2: Taxes in U.S. History
Lesson 4: The Social Security Act of 1935



1935 The Social Security Act is passed by Congress and signed into law by President Roosevelt.

1937 First Social Security benefits are paid. Early Social Security checks are one-time payments.

1939 The Social Security program is expanded to include dependents and survivors of workers who retire, are disabled, or die prematurely.

1940 Monthly Social Security payments begin. Ida May Fuller was the first person to receive a monthly Social Security check. She would live to be 100 and collect about \$22,000 over her lifetime.

1950 The first cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is made by Congress. Social Security payments are increased by 77 percent.

1956 The Social Security program is expanded to cover the disabled children of workers.

1961 Social Security Amendments lowers the retirement age to 62.

1975 Automatic cost-of-living adjustments to Social Security are approved. Now COLAs are based on the rise and fall of consumer prices.

1983 Because of a funding crisis, Social Security benefits are reduced. Benefits are taxed as income for the first time.

1999 Welfare reform affects Social Security. Efforts are made to ease disabled workers into the workforce.